

Nanyang Girls' High School
2011 Secondary 3 Language Arts

Patchwork-

This I Believe Reflective Essay

Pleasant Lies

*"Seldom, very seldom, does complete truth belong to any human disclosure;
Seldom can it happen that something is not a little disguised, or a little mistaken"*

-Emma,

By Jane Austen

When I came across this quote, my first thought is that it could not be any closer to the truth. Everybody lies, at least once in their life. There are no exceptions, no matter if it is the president, or just a normal citizen. How will our society change if people stop lying? For the better? Or for the worse? No one knows. However, not all lies are harmful, and I wish to convey this message through a book I read recently.

The book I read is "A Time for Dancing" by Davida Wills Hurwin. I think that this is a good example because the characters inside the book lie to each other, even themselves, not willing to accept reality. I had always taken notice of this book during my regular visits to the national library but did not borrow it after reading the very short summary at the back of the book. Maybe it was the word 'dancing' in the title of the book which made me interested since I am a dancer myself, or maybe it was just something inside me, screaming for me to read it. Anyway, I finally borrowed it and started reading it during the December holiday.

The storyline centers around two best friends, Samantha (Sam) and Julie (Jules) who knew each other from when they were six years old. They are closer than sisters and share a great passion for dancing, which is what brought them together in the first place. Everything was going great in their lives but just when they least expected it, disaster struck. Jules was diagnosed with cancer and had to undergo long, tiring sessions of chemotherapy, making it difficult for her to dance.

We then follow them in their journey of having to cope with that terrible fact. News spread and everybody, including Jules' family and Sam, starts to

behave differently around Jules. They tell her that everything is going to be fine and that she is going to recover in no time when things are not so. Even Julie tells herself that she will be able to continue dancing in no time and graduate from high school.

In a part of the book, we find out Jules' mother is actually very afraid and sad but then puts on a strong front for the sake of her daughter. Her father acts like everything is fine, as if things will change. Her friends treat her as if she is as fragile as a glass doll. Sam starts to grow apart from Jules, seeing as how she gets so tired and irritated after the chemotherapy sessions.

It is really heartbreaking to see how two inseparable best friends, confidants, or as mentioned in the book, "each other's one and only", start to grow apart. I think that the relationship they have is really rare and like no other and that they should treasure it.

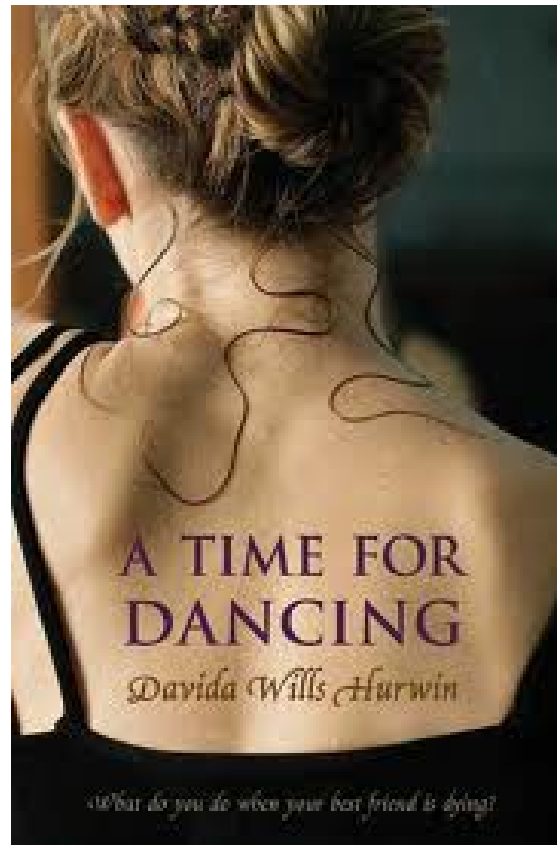
In my opinion, the first big 'break through point' in the book is when Jules suddenly comes to accept reality, when she repeats "I am going to die" twice. She also starts to understand why people lie and behave so differently to her. Especially the scene whereby she saw her mother crying softly to herself, that she came to know that she is not the only one suffering.

At the end of the book, Jules and Sam became even closer than ever at Jules death bed. It concludes with Jules' family and friend attending Jules' funeral.

Well, the reviewer knows what she is doing when she wrote "the readers will be flipping through the pages in tears". I will admit that I am a bookworm and have read many stories but then I don't usually cry because of it. This storyline really had me thinking about many things and bawling my eyes out.

Lies can be told, not only through words, but also by other means such as body language and actions. Not all lies are meant to hurt someone intentionally. Sometimes, they are to protect someone you love from getting hurt, just like Jules' mother. Like what the starting quote says, people lie, or at least disguise the truth a little in everyday lives, under normal circumstances, for many different reasons.

Cover of the book “A Time for Dancing” by Davida Wills Hurwin:



“What do you do when your best friend is dying?”